

Workers' fight

5p

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Free them NOW!

WILSON, STOKES & JONES GANG UP ON CAR WORKERS

HAROLD WILSON opened the New Year with a malicious attack on the working class, demanding that workers give "a fair day's work for a fair day's pay" to the bloodsucking capitalist parasites who exploit them. This, he claimed, was 'Britain's road to recovery!'

Last week, speaking in his own constituency, the Prime Minister returned to the subject and had a go at car workers. At the centre of his speech was the message: nationalisation means discipline.

"With public capital and an appropriate degree of public control involved" he stated, referring to the £50 million that the Government had invested in British Leyland "the Government could not justify to Parliament or the taxpayer the subsidising of large factories, involving thousands of jobs which could pay their way, but are failing to do so because of manifestly avoidable stoppages of production."

B.L.M.C.

Thus, far from the National Enterprise Board (used for the first time at BLMC) being a step towards "socialism" or even a gain for the working class, it is clear from this speech that it will be a step towards more vicious exploitation.

The very example that Wilson gave proves this. He pointed to the BLMC Cowley plant, complaining of its 'industrial relations record'. What he didn't of course mention was that this plant had been the last to accept Measured Day Work; workers there



put up the strongest resistance to slave-driving assembly line methods; and many of the strikes — lockouts in many cases — were part of this fighting resistance.

BLMC is going to have money poured into it to help it streamline and rationalise its production methods. The result will be even more stringent demands for work-discipline. But now instead of the workers fighting with both hands against management's attempts to nail them to the track, Wilson is trying

ON JANUARY 14, the trade union movement will measure itself and find out whether it can with justice walk tall or bow its head in shame. That is the day of the lobby for the release of the two building workers sentenced to jail at Shrewsbury for the "vicious" crime of picketing in a national official strike.

At long last the official trade union movement — which started out by vilifying and insulting the defendants and began to take some notice when rank and file militants mounted a campaign on their behalf — has gone some way towards fulfilling its promises.

Lobby

A number of trade unions have urged their members to attend the lobby. Calls came from the T&GWU, all sections of the AUEW, the GMWU, UCATT, ATEU, ABS, NUR and UPW. In many cases regions and districts urged attendance, and in some cases called for a one day or half day stoppage on the 14th. It is expected, for instance, that thousands of South Wales miners will strike for the day and come to London.

But behind the praise that has come from, for instance,

the Morning Star for these official commitments, is a massive dereliction of duty, an unconscionable ratting by the official movement on promises and pledges.

The TUC at its last Congress agreed to mobilise its full strength to free Ricky Tomlinson and Des Warren. What they have done falls a long way short of that.

When this lobby is over, that task will still remain.



to tie the workers' hands in this struggle by threatening to withhold investment.

This is the message: "put up or queue up ... on the dole".

But threats will not be enough. There will be every attempt to develop a machinery for tying workers' hands — one which looks as if it might be either neutral or on the workers' side. The central element of this machinery will be the now operating Conciliation and Arbitration Service set up under Michael Foot.

Jones

For instance, within a day of Wilson's speech Jumping Jack Jones, the leader of the workers Wilson slandered, had already leapt to his side in defence. He had in any case been peddling the "low wage, high unemployment" non sense for some time. Now he changed his tune slightly. "I think we should be discussing the expansion of the Conciliation and Arbitration Service and the need to ensure that firms do put their cards on the table to trade union officials..." he said, stressing in particular the importance of the CAS in resolving disputes.

Jones, of course, is a member of the Board of the CAS. For him the combination of a Labour Government, a 'Left'-Labour Minister for Employment (Foot) and trade union repres-

entation is full of promise and worthy of every confidence.

"Trade unionists", he added, "do not like striking, but until recently effective conciliation and arbitration arrangements have been absent for a number of years. Under the Labour Government a good independent service is being developed and I believe workers should use it as an alternative to the strike weapon...."

But while the CAS will become in time a central part of the machinery for tying workers' hands, it in turn will be surrounded by a mass of devices to help it do this. High on this list come re-written procedure agreements which would virtually ban all spontaneous and direct shop floor action.

The union leaders will, of course, have to be able to dominate and control the rank and file in order to achieve all this. They are helped enormously by the fact of a Labour Government. Now there will be a more serious attempt to incorporate the shop stewards into the official union machine. Already the Fords National Joint Negotiating Committee is officially recognised, and the tendency will be to make such committees an extension of the trade union bureaucracy rather than of shop floor democracy.

Knowing that this is an urgent task for the employing class in its

crisis, Leyland's have put forward a plan for a shop stewards' "national assembly". Stokes proposed a complex structure of a 20-30 strong "inner cabinet", separate consultative committees for each of BL's eight divisions, committees based on each of the sixty plants, and topping the lot a national assembly of 200, meeting about every six months. And if that doesn't tie your hands, what will!

These "participation" schemes are attempts to bind the working class to speed-up, productivity deals, low wages, unemployment. The fact that it is done in "left wing" language does not improve the matter — it just makes it harder to fight.

Answer

And fight it we must. As we said of the moves concerning BLMC in the last issue of **Workers Fight**, "Nationalisation in the capitalist bureaucratic form is, in fact, no more than a way of feather-bedding Stokes and his kind. The only answer is to impose our control... The struggle for control will in any case be at the centre of the fight against redundancies and speed-up."

Wilson knows this. His moves, those of Jack Jones, those of Lord Stokes as well as many left-talking Labour MPs and trade union officials are aimed at restricting

that struggle. The Communist Party, for instance, has a policy of favouring this kind of "participation" in nationalised industries; it will no doubt be extended to these latter day alternatives to nationalisation like BLMC.

Wealth

And all this in the name of that great sacred cow, "public money". But in the final analysis, such an idea is nonsense. All the wealth there is, is created by one class, the working class. Whether a company is in the so-called private sector of the nationalised sector it is run on the wealth that can be squeezed out of the operatives in the industry, and for the sole purpose of extracting that wealth. On that basis, there is nothing to choose between these two sectors. Wealth in either of them is used for the benefit not of the class that creates it, but in the interests of the capitalist class — whether a Labour or a Tory government is in power.

Control, rank and file organisation and the independence of the working class from the state which runs and defence the bosses' system, must as ever be our watchwords. **And we will have to watch them even more carefully in the face of this insidious attack from within the labour movement.**

JACK PRICE

THE GROWING discontent of the working class in Egypt erupted on New Year's Day in massive street demonstrations in Cairo, in protest against low wages and the crushing cost of living. The government brought out troops and police against the workers — which resulted in a great spreading of the demonstration, with students joining in.

The violent protest of the Egyptian workers (which began at the huge Helwan complex) was against the soaring cost of basic commodities, especially food, clothing and footwear, the complete breakdown in the transport system, the rampant corruption in government and among the upper classes, and the widening gap between the standard of living of the latter and

SADAT HIDES BEHIND NEW WAR

that of the masses.

President Sadat's response was a heavy stick and a very thin carrot. Several hundred people were arrested for so-called "Communist activity", the largest such operation since Sadat took over in 1970. These people — mainly workers and students — were accused of acting in the interests of Zionism, exploiting economic difficulties which the government "is handling", and inciting the public to "destructive and irresponsible acts".

Sadat warned that the war with Israel was not over, and affirmed that the law which makes demonstrations illegal would be

enforced ruthlessly in future.

This is the latest in a series of political arrests of so-called "extremists" who have taken part in anti-government activity recently. (The Egyptian penal code provides for up to ten years for acts aimed at "domination by one social class of other classes, or overthrowing the basic social or economic system of the state.")

In addition, Sadat decreed emergency measures "to meet people's requirements", and promised enforcement of the anti-corruption laws. These are for the most part vague promises, such as allocating more money for the import of basic foodstuffs and

THREAT

essentials, which have been scarce for months or on sale at extortionate prices, promising cheaper footwear — not to mention also "justice and equality" — for public sector employees. One promise here, just to emphasise the Egyptian government's standards of "justice", is for wage increases to be paid when due!

This is the latest episode in the growing militancy of the Egyptian masses, and it is significant that Sadat has tried to blackmail them

into accepting poverty by using the danger of a new war in the Middle East. There is also the unfortunate fact that many workers are 'nostalgic' for the Nasser years, when such a high cost of living was unknown; this nostalgia was evident in last week's demonstrations. But the conditions for the Egyptian workers are extremely serious. The cost of living has risen 50% since the 1973 war. The big investment programme of the US in Egypt has brought no 'return' for the masses there. Crime is rising, the black market is flourishing and the general discontent has spread to the army.

Sadat may see a new war as a means of escaping these contradictions and problems.

J.W.H.

HOW TO CONTROL THE CONDITIONS OF WORK

by Neal Smith

RECENT issues of Workers Fight have talked about the need for genuine rank and file movements, involving militants in industry in an organised fashion to fight for their rights against the bosses, and also against the betrayals of the union leaderships. Various forms of rank and file organisation already exist in many industries — shop stewards groups, inter union liaison etc — but are not linked by either a national organisation or a common programme.

The Rank and File Movement set up and controlled by the International Socialism Group attempts to sell itself as a national rank and file movement encompassing all workers — yet it has no clear conception of where it is going, what it fights for, nor any serious national presence.

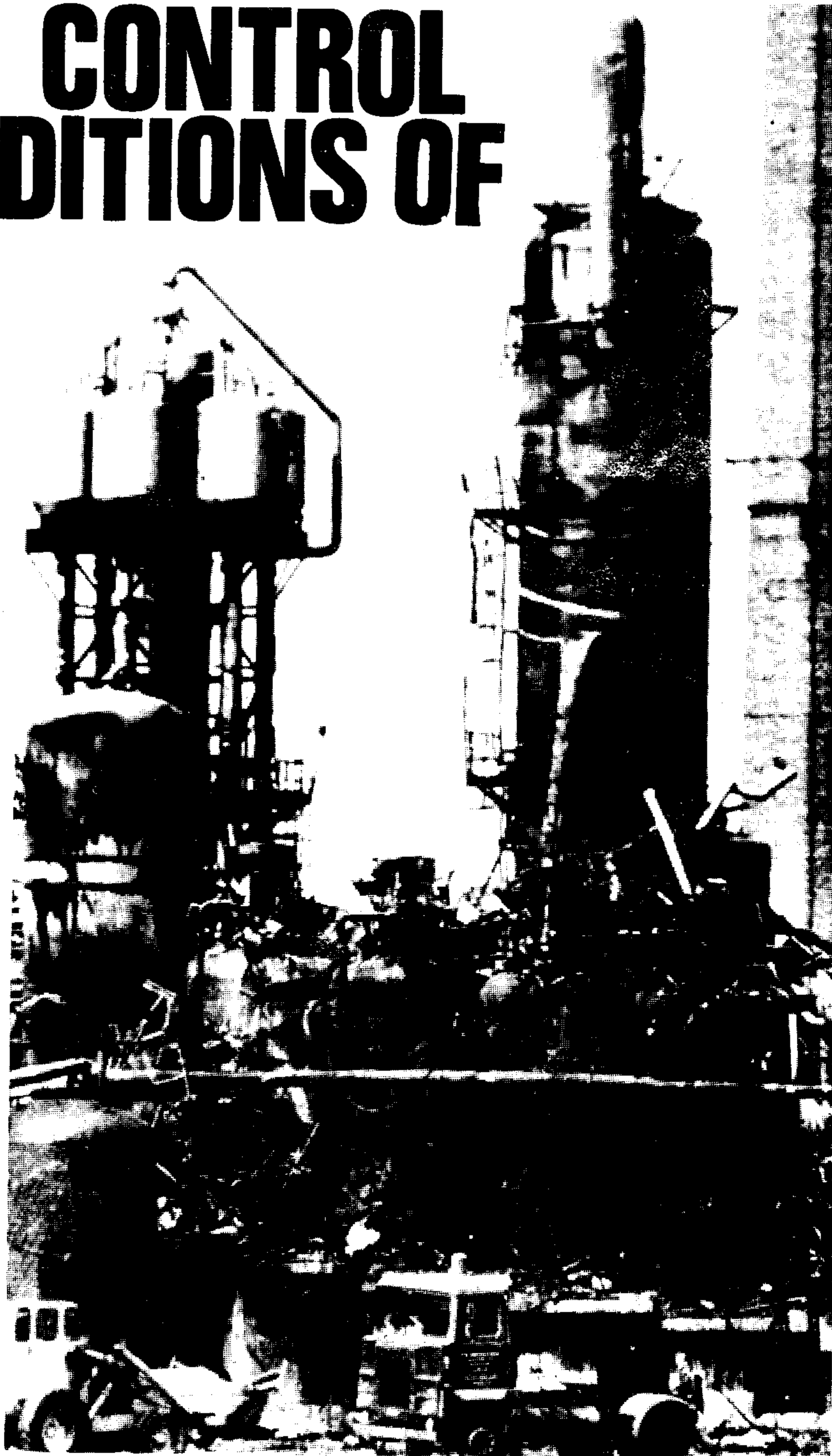
ALL UNIONS

At the moment the only powerful expression of the rank and file are the various forms of shop stewards organisations that have arisen since the Second World War, such as the National Ports Shop Stewards Committee. These organisations have arisen out of a real need felt by the union members to fight more effectively and therefore to be organised more effectively.

One such body is the Lucas Aerospace Combine Shop Stewards Committee, which covers all the factories up and down the country in the combine and includes delegates from all unions ranging from unskilled workers to high grade technicians.

The committee produces a monthly paper whose political level would shame the organisers of the IS Rank and File conferences. It includes articles on nationalisation (they call for nationalisation of Lucas under workers control), worker participation (they are against it) book reviews and information on the Committee's Science and Technology Advisory Service.

This service represents an



The Nypro plant at Flixborough. 29 workers lost their lives, but they had no control over the design or running of the works.

important breakthrough in how workers should react to issues of health at work, redundancy, speedup and all those other supposed blessings of new machinery.

As the Combine Committee's paper puts it, "The industry in which we work is changing at a colossal rate. Traditional forms of skill and work processes are being replaced by new, complicated techniques. When these techniques are introduced to maximise profits, technological change

brings a host of problems in its wake. At one level it breaks up wage patterns, destroys skills and replaces workers by machines. Far from leading to a shorter working week, longer holidays and leisure time, in practice the reverse is usually the case. It frequently results in increased work tempo and shift working for some, and unemployment for others. At another level, it gives rise to a series of health hazards, both mental and physical. In order that our members are fully aware of the

potential problems of any new technology, the Combine Committee has now set up a Science and Technology Advisory Service. Any Shop Stewards Committee or office Committee can apply to the service for advice on the safeguards it should demand when organisational changes are about to take place or if new equipment and processes are to be introduced."

Already the Service has looked at computer aided design, the introduction of numerical control for machine tools, and the health problems associated with electro-chemical machinery and high noise levels in workshops.

On this last issue of noise — a common hazard in industry — it was found that in a sheet metal workshop, noise levels were so high that one quarter of workers there were deaf. You can pick out an experienced worker easily — he's one of the ones that can lip read!

The Service is going to recommend to the Shop Stewards Committee acceptable noise levels to campaign for, and has recommended that, instead of using ear muffs for protection, sonic ear valves should be used. These are small devices that fit into the ear and cut out the damaging noise frequencies, but let other sounds be heard. Workers wearing these can then talk to their mates or listen to the sound of a machine without being damaged.

HAZARDS

At the moment their use isn't widespread because of the 'expense'!

The Service makes use of the technical skills, experience and advice of the worker on the job. In addition, especially for highly specialised knowledge such as the toxic effects of various chemicals, offers of help have been given by outside individuals and bodies such as the Socialist Medical Association and the British Society for Social Responsibility in Science. However, their conclusions do not guide policy, which is always finally decided by the Combine Committee together with the worker who is really exposed to the hazards and problems.

And these hazards are not confined to the shop floor. In some of the rooms in which computers are installed, there are not windows to the outside. All the lighting is artificial and some of the staff working there have reported severe headaches and eyestrain. The Combine Committee is consulting a leading optics expert, and will present his report to the staff involved — who will decide what action should be taken.

The success of the Service has

prompted the company into an attempt to outflank the Combine Committee by appointing its own Environmental Health and Safety Committee. This is a public relations exercise attempting to mislead the workers that they and the management are jointly responsible for the hazards workers face.

As one of the people connected with the Combine Committee's Service pointed out, the Combine Committee and the rank and file do not believe in workers sitting down with bosses to try and solve the bosses' problems.

It is they and the system they are part of that are responsible for redundancies, for speedups, for the thousands of working people killed and injured every year at work. The only interest workers have in meeting management is insofar as it is part of a fight against these effects.

HYPOCRISY

Lucas workers have seen through the charade of 'participation'. They are not prepared to be side tracked onto some official company committee. With their own advisory Service under the control of the rank and file worker, they can get the best information, decide what they want and how best to fight for it.

In fact nothing so well proves the hypocrisy of bosses who cry crocodile tears over injuries and damage to workers than that, as soon as workers get together and do something really effective about health and safety, management does its best to undermine them.

The Lucas workers' Science and Technology Advisory Service is so far the only one of its kind in Britain. Every factory and workplace should organise a service of this kind. This is the best way of tackling the enormous problems of the working environment through the genuine participation and control of the workers most closely and crucially involved.

REAL FIGHT

The action of the Lucas workers cuts across all the 'participation' schemes favoured by management. This is particularly important in the light of the proposed legislation on health and safety at work. The legislation (some of which is already coming into force) proposes to introduce just the sort of management committee that the Lucas workers have rejected. It is vital to make sure that workers control the working environment, and this cannot be done by shadow boxing with the bosses. A real fight, like the one at Lucas, is needed.

Appeal from Iranian students

THE Iranian Student Society in Great Britain has issued the following statement:

THE Iranian regime, while continuing its savage butchery of patriots at home, has intensified its persecution of Iranian dissident personalities in metropolitan countries abroad in an attempt to silence their voices of protest.

The Iranian Consulate in London has a long history of harassment of Iranian nationals in this country and the revelations of its spying and cloak and dagger activities right in the heart

of London became the subject of long feature articles in the 'Sunday Times' and other newspapers some 6 months ago.

Unwarranted

True to its nefarious traditions, the Consulate has now embarked upon further harassment of Iranian students by refusing to revalidate their passports. This same unwarranted act has been put into operation by Iranian diplomatic missions in Austria and France.

It is evident that such unlawful acts, by depriving

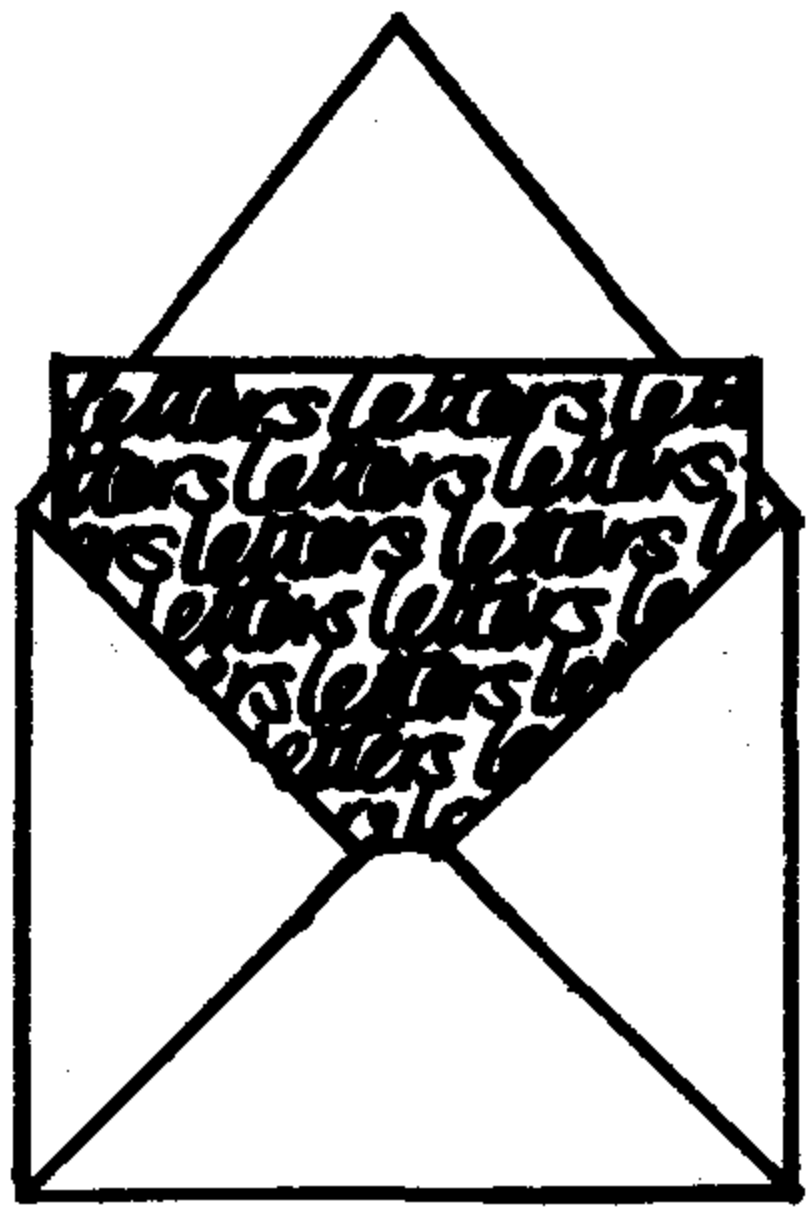
Iranian students and nationals of their passports, are designed to either silence their voices or force their return to Iran, with the consequent inevitable tortures and persecutions.

These arbitrary and unlawful measures cannot be tolerated and we profoundly express this protest against the victimisation and demand that Iranian Consulate officials cease this harassment and hostility towards Iranian students in this country.

(The I.S.S. can be contacted care of 101-103 Gower Street, London W.C.1)

OPEN LETTER FOR A REVOLUTIONARY REGROUPMENT

Send stamped addressed envelope to Workers Fight, 98 Gifford Street, London N.1



Comrades - It may seem ironic to some that Lawrie White, as a member of the IMG (which not so long ago was decrying the Republican bombings of military targets in Britain) should attack *Workers Fight* (WF81) for condemning indiscriminate slaughter, and for its honesty in admitting that some republicans may have been involved.

But anyone who knows about the IMG's vagaries, the shifts and jumps and about-turns in many of its policies, and its slide from boldly proclaimed solidarity with the Irish liberation fighters to almost silent "support" and then criticism of the campaign in Britain against military targets, should not have been shocked by Comrade White's outburst, nor by Clarissa Howard's cover-up article in *Red Weekly*.

There are inconsistencies and contradictions in Lawrie White's letter: no doubt he put that down to being so dialectical...

His arguments can be summed up thus:

The Birmingham bombings (and other subsequent ones) must have been "a right wing provocation", as there is so obviously no possibility that even one republican sympathiser could have been in any way involved, and the explosions were only useful to the bourgeoisie. However, WF's condemnation of these bombings as useful only to the bourgeoisie serves to "merely reinforce" "the hypocrisy of the anti-IRA hysteria whipped up by the press": the "violence of the oppressed" (SAS or Orange terror gang?) must not be criticised simply because it was aimed at working class civilians unconnected with Britain's imperial policy (except in the most indirect way, by their approval of that policy).

Of course the Special Branch frames (or tries to frame) political and trade union militants, of course it uses petty criminals like the Littlejohns in attempts to discredit Republicanism, of course it infiltrates various Irish, Black, pacifist and left groups with its spies and provocateurs in the hope of stirring up some shit.

Of course the SAS is not above forming "pseudo-gangs" of false republicans (or anarchists, communists etc.) nor above planting bombs in busy city centres; in fact it could be behind much of Ulster's "sectarian violence" and some of the recent bombings here.

Of course the press would like to blame "the IRA", "the Reds" and "the Anarchists" (who all seem to be the same thing) for everything from thunderstorms to train crashes, from high prices to "industrial unrest"; they long for the days when one could just point a finger at a person and shout: "Witch!"

But does all that make every Republican activist (including non-aligned, splinter and fringe groups, and inexperienced elements with no strong Fenian traditions) immune to feelings of frustration, despair, fear, hate and anger? Can their political judgment be swayed, or are they calm, logical and infallible guerilla superheroes? In short, are they merely the sentimental fantasies of some middle class romantic's mind, or are they real, living, flesh and blood human beings?

Socialists must never glorify the working class or a national liberation movement, must never try to mould the facts to conform with the "party line" or their conception of how things should be, must never try to disguise things or gloss over mistakes, must never try to be slick and oh-so-cunningly clever.

Our first task is to say what is: to face reality boldly and honestly, and explain things truthfully to the working class. No revolutionary movement can be built on the shifting sands of evasiveness, slickness, vacillation, pretence and sentimentalisation; one day the rose-coloured glasses will make an abyss look like a pleasant valley, and reality will hit the wearers with a bang.

So stop peddling those wierd IMG sunshine specs, will you Lawrie? - **PETER CONLAN, Middlesbrough.**

WALK INTO any sleazy newsagents, even today, and you will find a small array of literature dealing with the horrors of the Japanese prisoner of war camps: these people with a totally alien and different tradition, with no idea of 'fair play', no respect for 'the rules', who dealt out beatings and torture such as would never be countenanced in the civilised west.

But here is one testimonial to the civilised west by one of its own champions: "I would say that the conditions I found existing in some camps in Kenya were worse, far worse, than anything I had experienced in my four and a half years as a prisoner of the Japanese."

The writer is Duncan McPherson, the Assistant Commissioner of Police in charge of the CID under the British colonial administration of Kenya. He is quoted by **John McGuffin** in *The Guinea Pigs*, in which he sets out to examine what happened to just 14 of the 1500 people lifted at the beginning of Internment in the north of Ireland in August 1971. He documents these events in the context of a long tradition of British overseas rule after the last war — Malaya (1948-60), Kenya (1952-56), Cyprus (1955-59) and Aden (1963-67).

McGuffin finds little difference in the use of brutality against prisoners — beatings, starvation, degrading treatment, and so on. The difference lies in the pseudo-scientific interrogation method that was used, and that as a consequence had a much more devastating effect (short of death).

That method is called Sensory Deprivation, S.D. for short. When details began to be known

TORTURE ON THE BRAIN

about this treatment, many people probably felt (aided later by the complacent Compton and Parker reports) that covering peoples heads with black hoods and making them stand against a wall in the 'search' position could hardly be termed torture, let alone brutality (although Parker did bring himself to allude to "ill treatment").

Why not try out this little experiment for yourself? Start out by placing a double lined black hood over your head coming down over your shoulders, so that the supply of fresh air runs out nice and quick. Now go as far back from the wall as possible so that you can just support yourself on your fingertips with your arms splayed out and your legs splayed out.

Make sure that the room is cold, and that you get no sleep for a few days, and no food either; add a loud hissing noise in the background which blocks out all other sounds.

Now spice it up (you will need someone else for this) with a fair amount of physical brutality for every time you collapse.

An interesting experiment — though one could never simulate the terror induced by blanks going off by your head, and never

convince the willing subject of such an experiment of how it feels as a helpless prisoner, unable to end the experiment and walk out at any time.

In fact, in one Canadian experiment where the subjects were paid according to the amount of time they could keep sustain it (minus the brutality, presumably) most people lasted only a few hours.

The men lifted by the British Army in 1971 had to endure it for a week non-stop.



The experience left deep psychological scars. Many of the men still have terrifying hallucinations, suicidal tendencies, searing headaches and other ill effects.

Sensory deprivation as opposed to other forms of torture is not new. Stalin certainly used it for his Moscow show trials to obtain confessions of treachery from prominent Bolsheviks. As a method it has been researched at McGill University in Montreal (who conducted the experiment described above) and in the USA



(one place even boasted a "generous grant-in-aid for research, given by the office of the Surgeon General of the Army and the National Science Foundation").

The object is always the same: to so disorientate a person that he or she becomes maleable, open to suggestion, and forthcoming with information. The method has the added attraction that it gives a picture of the prisoners as pitiful and subhuman without leaving any physical marks. Torturers feel less inhibited when they are able to think of the prisoner as a member of a different species.

S.D. works so well because it goes straight to the brain as a physical organ. The brain for normal functioning needs four main things: oxygen (hence the hood), sugar (hence the lack of food), sleep and information from the senses (hence the hood again, the 'search' position and the hissing noise that cuts out all other sound). Total deprivation can lead to death or madness. Partial and temporary deprivation leads to disorientation, confusion and loss of 'identity' and the sense of time and place, while not eliminating memory and the ability to give information.



The justification for such interrogation is usually the need to discover enemy agents, arms caches and so on. McGuffin shows that in the cases of the men put through this by the British Army in 1971, the motive was more experimental. Hence his title.

The men appear to have been picked on a geographical basis. Indeed, one man had been told that he was chosen because "we needed someone from the Omagh area." Half the men were released soon afterwards, without any charges being brought against them. Finally, not one of the 14 had his fingerprints taken - implying that the Army was not too concerned about linking up these men with acts of sabotage etc.

The 14 were all Catholics. Part of the exercise was that the terror induced in these randomly chosen individuals would form an element in the suppression and terrorisation of the whole Catholic community; in the same way as the constant wrecking raids on people's homes (one man has had his home searched 57 times) and later the random assassinations in Catholic areas, which the Army either 'did itself' (using the under-cover SAS squads) or helped the Orange murder gangs to do.

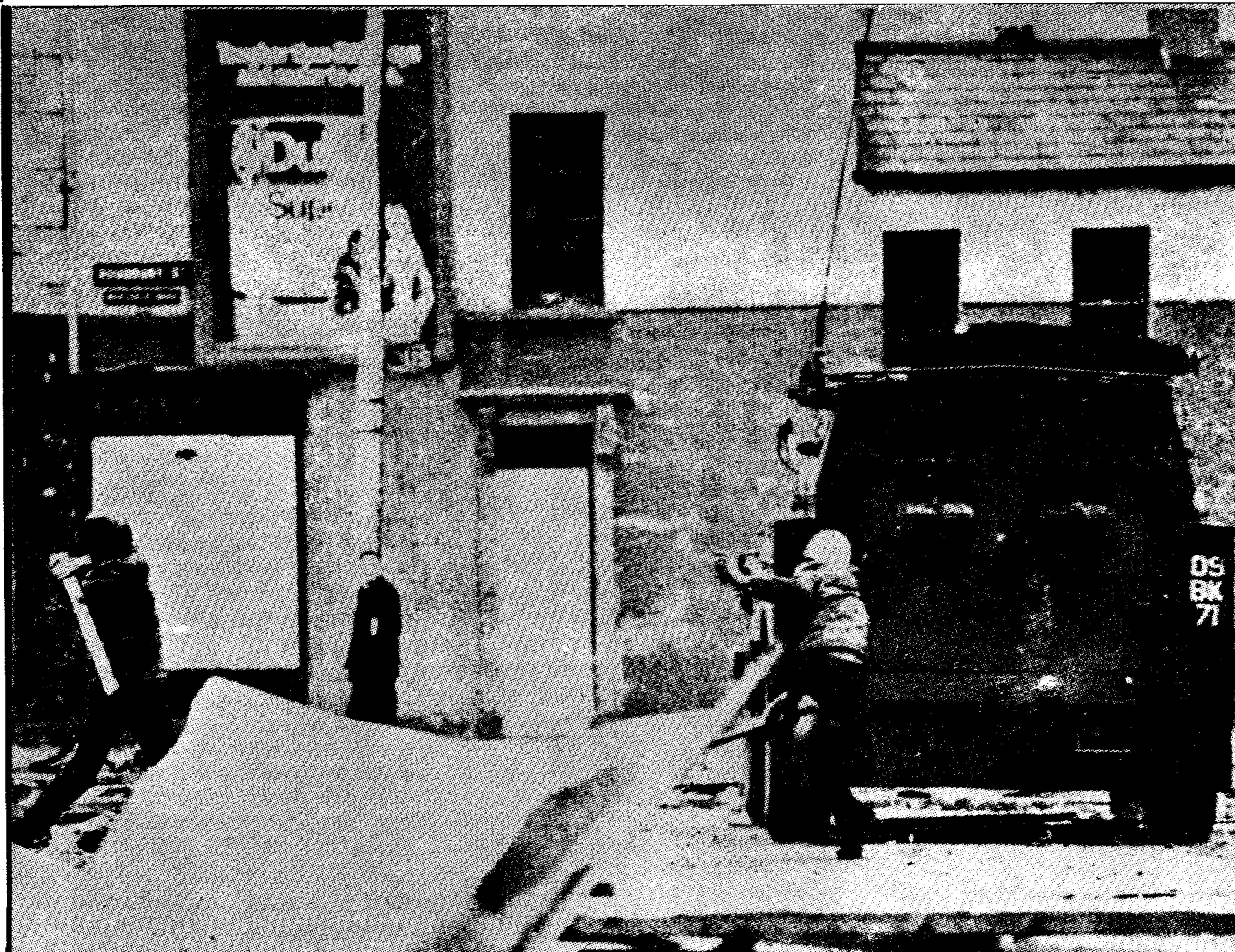


McGuffin also examines the implications of torture, and the fact that the techniques learned in the process tend to spread (as for instance from Algeria to mainland France during the Algerian independence struggle). They also come to be accepted as normal — the Army manoeuvres at London Airport, particularly at the time of the last miners' strike, must be seen in this light.

There certainly has, in the course of the Irish struggle, been a considerable advance in the Army's technology of anti-population repression — CS (and CR) gas, rubber bullets, portable radar, squawk boxes and the like. The likelihood is that we will see the same thing here. The Prevention of Terrorism Act is only one step in that direction, but an important one, allowing the police up to seven days (and in practice much longer, once they have served an exclusion order) to hold people with no need to charge them with any specific crime.

Although weak in some of the remedies offered, John McGuffin's well documented book offers a valuable and frightening glimpse beneath the veneer of British democracy — particularly the export model.

JEFF DWYER



"12 Months of Defiance" — the Provisional Republican Movement's Calendar for 1975 — has just arrived over here. It's got no glistening nudes photographed in exotic

settings by top fashion photographers. It won't become a Collector's Item to be auctioned at Sotheby's. But it does give a vivid impression of Belfast, in 12 expressive

pictures of tiny kids showing their contempt and hatred for the soldiers, with all their armoury, who invade and try to dominate their streets.

BLOODY SUNDAY WHITEWASH IS WEARING THIN

THE Ministry of Defence recently made awards ranging from £250 to £16,000 to the relatives of the 13 men killed by the British Army on Bloody Sunday in January 1972.

Though the Ministry was quick to point out that these were ex-gratia payments made out of the kindness of its heart and implying no legal responsibility, it helps to undermine the story the army peddles about what happened on Bloody Sunday, a story supported by the Widgery Inquiry and the British government.

This is why the payments were so hysterically attacked in the right wing press as undermining the Army's morale. It was at first claimed that those shot had been either firing on the soldiers or handling explosives. Tests made on the bodies showed that some of the 13 could not possibly have done this, and in the case of the others, the traces found could have been caused without coming into direct contact with weapons or explosives.

The Army stuck to its earlier story, and received support from

the Widgery report, which included the classic statement that the paratroops' "behaviour was bordering on the reckless", but no more.

The awards now made are a tacit admission that the Army's version of the story is completely untrue, and was simply intended to cover up their attempt to drive the Nationalist community of the North

off the streets.

Nobody, however, should see the awards as a sign of the British government's penitence. It is a minor concession, made as a sign of good faith to the "moderates" in the Catholic community — mainly the SDLP — who have been bitter at their loss of credibility after the concessions made by Rees to the Loyalists after the Ulster Workers Council strike in May.

It is an attempt to convince the Catholics that the British are men of goodwill, without making any really meaningful concessions.

Another Bloody Sunday is not impossible. While the British Army remains, it will be arrayed against the Nationalist population, who will assert their resistance in the streets.

Another Bloody Sunday is in fact only too possible unless the Army is withdrawn. To this end the TROOPS OUT MOVEMENT has called a demonstration on 2nd February — the 3rd anniversary of Bloody Sunday — to commemorate that event and to demand the withdrawal of British troops from Ireland.

BLOODY SUNDAY COMMEMORATION

February 1st: Rally at Speakers' Corner, Hyde Park, London, 12.30pm; followed by public meeting at 2.30 p.m. Organised by Troops Out Movement.

January 26th: Manchester T.O.M. rally, 2.30pm, Small Hall, Barnes Wallis Building, UMIST (near Piccadilly Station). Speakers include Joan Maynard MP, Ernie Roberts, Eamonn McCann, and Alasdair Renwick.

By Special correspondent
JAMES NGOBI

LOOKING at the forces pressing for a 'settlement' between Ian Smith's racist colonials and the African nationalists now gathered under the banner of the African National Council of Zimbabwe, socialists in Britain can only hold their breath and gape that the coming constitutional conference breaks down in utter chaos.

South Africa's premier Vorster wants to make sure of a number of years of peace in southern Africa to consolidate his apartheid regime and get the ghetto 'Bantustans' off the ground. And he hopes that by trading away Ian Smith's regime and ending certain aspects of 'petty Apartheid' (such as the 'Whites only' signs on park benches) he will gain a stable black government in Rhodesia not threatened with guerilla war, and also win goodwill and an immensely profitable trading relationship with the rest of Africa. According to the US periodical *Newsweek* in Vorster's recent discussions with heads of state on the right wing of the Organisation of African Unity (Senghor and Houphouet Boigny) he in fact received assurances that they would press for South Africa's acceptance on these conditions.

Vorster has so far steered a reluctant Smith, visibly kicking and screaming, into somewhere in the vicinity of a conference table, using threats to withdraw the South African troops Smith depends on in his fight to suppress nationalist guerillas, and probably also threats to cut off Rhodesia's rail links to South African ports and the use of those ports. He is also likely to have told Smith that that he won't be able to rely on South Africa to help conceal the origin of Rhodesian goods and help in sanctions busting operations.

Options

The United States government is also keen to see a settlement, in accordance with objectives outlined in a secret memorandum drawn up under Kissinger's direction by experts from the State and Defence Departments and the CIA.

This document, which has been publicised by some US papers and the *Observer* in this country (5th January 1975), lists "important but not vital" US economic, political and military interests in Southern Africa. Among a variety of options, it favours pressure "to encourage moderation of the current rigid racial and colonial policies of the white regimes" (without basically changing them) in order "to protect economic, scientific and strategic interests and opportunities in the region, including the orderly marketing of South Africa's gold production."

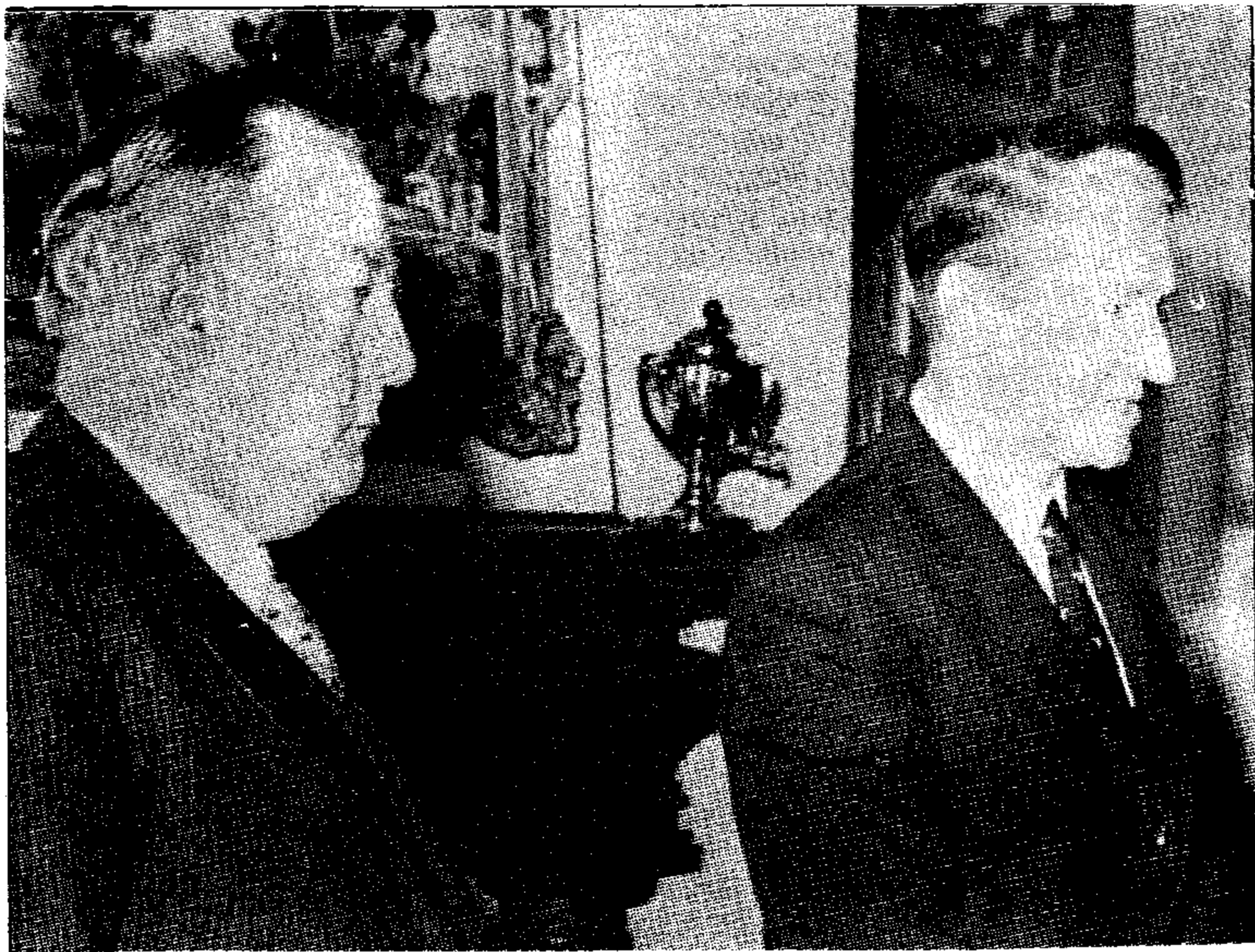
British capitalism, with £1,250 million invested in South Africa and a massively profitable trade with black Africa, is also desperate to normalise trade relationships and at the same time make sure it keeps the goodwill it has in black Africa — while doing nothing against the South African prison-house — by appearing to be 'principled' over the Rhodesian black majority.

Thus, when it began to look as if the Vorster/Kaunda initiative over Rhodesia was running out of steam, Callaghan has travelled hot-foot to Africa, done the rounds of the various interested parties, and pumped fresh blood into the proposed negotiations with the announcement of a constitutional conference to be convened by Britain.

Sinister

The sight of this trio of bloody-handed imperialist profit-grabbers pressing for African majority rule in Zimbabwe is deeply sinister. And what makes it effective and threatening is that an equal pressure is being kept up behind the Zimbabwe nationalists by their allies — Zambia and the new Frelimo government in Mozambique.

Not long ago, on the 10th anniversary of Kenya's independence, an editorial in the *Kenya Daily Nation* aptly summed



Vorster (left) and Smith. Trying to gain a safe-conduct for Apartheid

up the attitude of many African states today: "In this day and age, friendship is more often than not calculated on a material basis." Ghana, Nigeria and Zambia are all numbered among the numerous sanctions busters that have boosted Rhodesia's trade to a volume higher than any previously known. Between Zambia and South Africa runs a trade valued at £30 million — small, but significant for Zambia; and the presence of Rhodesia standing four-square across this trade route is a serious inconvenience.

In Mozambique, the brand new Frelimo government, after a ten year armed struggle against the Portuguese for national independence, has already decided to come to an economic accommodation with neighbouring

the same way as the Frelimo and MPLA successes (in Mozambique and Angola) have undermined Smith. (And they affected South Africa too, with illegal rallies and demonstrations greeting the Mozambique victory.)

There is every possibility of using Rhodesia as a 'soft target', a lever to prise open the South African bolts.

Which is why, in the words of the IISS study, if there is any escalation of conflict South Africa might prefer "to countenance and assist in a controlled implementation of majority rule in Rhodesia in return for an acceptable measure of regional security."

This forecast couldn't have been more accurate: Vorster has positively thrown himself into the

ago "an intractable international problem would at least be reduced to its true proportions. There would still be South Africa itself, the citadel of apartheid; but it would be a South Africa enjoying a breathing space in a very different climate. She would have no guerillas to fight, no Rhodesian sanctions to break. Instead she would be sharing her economic potential and her skills with all her black neighbours."

For the Rhodesian black population there is an overwhelming argument (quite apart from the chance to aid their South African borthers) for holding out for victory.

Phased

Negotiations will be along the lines of phased extensions of the franchise, giving Smith time to make various adjustments, regroup forces, fiddle and gerrymander, while still in full control of his formidable apparatus of repression. He is a past master at that sort of trickery — such as the 'signatures' he obtained by sheer bribery and deceit to support his attempted deal with Home in 1972). Franchise qualifications based on education (such as are being mooted now) have always meant that the controlling whites make sure that no real education will be available for blacks: thus they get no education, and no vote either. (Now, poverty-stricken blacks have to pay for education, which is free to the rich and privileged whites; little wonder that between 1928 and 1964 only 94 Africans succeeded in obtaining High School Certificates.) Other franchise qualifications based on property and earnings were always manipulated to assure political power for the white settlers: in 1968, for instance, the earnings qualifications was raised from £720 per annum to £960, at a time when African wages averaged around £90 a year.

Apart from the franchise, there is still the whole question of the white land-grab, which has given most of the land, and all the best land and the urban areas, to the quarter million settlers, leaving the five and a half million Africans in dire poverty. It is obvious that they will not abandon their rich takings without a further protracted struggle even while parliamentary rule is eased from their grasp.

Even with gradual changes in land apportionment, and the abolition of the more repressive legislation (South Africa-style pass laws and racial "immorality" Acts) Rhodesia would still be very much the same kind of deeply exploitative capitalist and colonialist society that it is today. No major changes could be expected to flow from negotiations such as the ones being fixed up now.

Parasites

A decisive victory over Smith and his parasites is highly possible. Blacks outnumber whites by 22 to 1. A mere 300-400 armed guerillas, in a matter of less than a year, have, in the words of one observer "turned much of northern Rhodesia into an armed camp."

At any time, especially given a wave of enthusiasm and with victory in sight, they could be joined by some of the 300,000 young, unemployed expatriate black Zimbabweans in Zambia and Tanzania.

Smith evidently fears their ranks being swollen, too, from the ranks of the local population, and has tried to forestall this by shifting large sections of the African population from the border areas, setting up fortified 'strategic villages' (like those in Vietnam) and with mass arrests and fines on whole villages suspected of helping the resistance.

In the long term, however, Smith must know that this war is militarily unwinnable. As the IISS study concludes, "if the guerillas acquire the ability to expand... it is doubtful whether rule by the white minority... could be sustained."

Already, the guerillas have been holding down the entire Rhodesian armed forces, plus volunteers working after-hours shifts, plus the 3,000 South African regulars that Vorster is threatening to withdraw. Smith's own police and army are showing

signs of unrest too: 6 black NCOs have been secretly court martialled for mutiny, and in any back-to-to-wall situation, Smith knows he can't rely on the black one third of his army, or the black two thirds of his police.

The strain is already telling, both in terms of the economy and of a spreading paranoia among the whites. By December 1973, tourism had gone down by 26% on the year before, and there was a net white emigration for the first time since 1966.

Defence spending rose in one year from 9% to 12% of the budget. Meanwhile terms of sanctions-busting trade are increasingly adverse for Rhodesia. And on top of that, farmers lost £12 million in last year's draught.

If the puppet masters are able to get their way in the coming negotiations then the chance of winning decisively will have been lost, possibly for years to come. Already the three illegal groupings (ZANU, ZAPU and Frolizi) have been merged into the ANC, under the leadership (even if only nominal) of Bishop Abel Muzorewa, who personally agreed to a sell-out in July when Smith offered 6 more black seats in Parliament (making 22 black seats as against 50 white ones), and only went back on it when he couldn't get agreement from his supporters.

In March last year an inaugural ANC congress defined its aims as "the adoption of a strategy of negotiation and not confrontation", and in fact it had pursued this strategy, talking with Smith, while its meetings were banned and broken up and 33 of its senior executive members were detained or restricted. This, as far as the coming conference's promoters are concerned, is evidently the ideal posture.

They know that if the talks fail, the guerilla groups will be enormously strengthened, as the present, more open, political situation will have raised tremendous enthusiasm among the black population (as the Pearce Commission did in 1972; it was in fact this which gave the initial impetus to the guerilla movement.)

New Statesman



The way would be open for a decisive sweeping away of the Smith regime and a new start which could seriously threaten South Africa. **The choice for the African nationalists therefore is not whether half a loaf is better than none, but whether half a loaf is better than a whole loaf.**

One way or another, the recent developments show a number of things. First, they are the result not of abstract "historical forces" or "winds of change", concepts so beloved of bourgeois liberals. Neither were they brought about by sanctions on Rhodesian trade — but rather, by the armed initiative of the African masses and their vanguard in both Rhodesia and the Portuguese colonies.

Second, the rush to negotiate vindicates, by default, the need for clear political objectives.

Lastly, it might be an interesting exercise to speculate on what things would be looking like if Britain had, as some misguided voices on Labour's Left once demanded, sent troops in "against Smith". No doubt they would be "keeping the peace" in their own way, just as they have "kept the peace" in Northern Ireland: in other words, kept the status quo, and helped repress the revolutionaries.

AFTER PORTUGAL'S DEFEAT WHITES ARE ON THE RUN IN AFRICA

South Africa: out of its £184 million foreign exchange earnings, £114 million comes from South Africa in wages for the Mozambique immigrant gold miners and in dues for use of the port of Lourenco Marques. Another £15 million is the expected revenue from Cabora Bassa electricity when this starts flowing into South Africa. A recent International Institute for Strategic Studies assessment quoted in the *Economist* concluded that Mozambique's economic dependence was South Africa's "trump card". (S. Africa itself is dependent on Mozambique labour, electricity and port facilities, but of course its economy can absorb such small blows, whereas they would probably devastate Mozambique.)

Added to the desire to conduct a normalised trade between the regions of Africa artificially carved up by imperialism, there is probably a genuine belief on the part of people like Kaunda that, by seizing the first real chance of concessions from Smith, they are doing the best for Zimbabwe. They see the opportunity, since the fall of Portuguese colonialism and with the obvious eagerness of Vorster to ditch Smith, to shift the savage injustice and violence of his regime out of the way — or at least get more "power sharing" concessions from Smith than have ever been forthcoming before.

Smith is certainly on the run. So much so, however, that far, far more can be achieved by fighting on. Such an achievement, unlike the effect of a negotiated, manipulated and gradually evolving settlement, would reverberate throughout Southern Africa, sending devastating shock waves through the impregnable fortress of South Africa itself in



arm-twisting business, desperate to get things sewn up as fast as possible. (Especially now that a transitional government in Angola appears to have been agreed on, one which greatly favours the right wing, pro-US and pro-Zaire sections of the anti-Portugal nationalists, UNITA and FNLA.)

Vorster knows that Southern Africa must be on the brink of either a major new period of accommodation, or a major war — either a peace that will mean a new lease of life for apartheid, or a war that could spell its ultimate doom. "If by agreement Rhodesia were to be set, however gradually, on the road to majority rule" the Sunday Telegraph editorialised a month

DISCUSSION

Wages for housework

ROS GAINS writes

NOT SO SIMPLE

Comrades - I broadly agree with the two articles dealing with the question of the Wages for Housework demand (WF79). But I was disturbed by the tone and terminology used, which I find trite and oversimplified.

I do not support the Wages for Housework call. Nor, incidentally, have very many members of the Women's Liberation Movement. My main objections to it, however, are on practical grounds. In a time of recession, capitalism might be well suited if all its women workers returned to the home to care for sick relatives, educate children and feed their husbands. Clearly the Social Services are going to be the first to be cut back, and so our demands should be for no deterioration in social facilities, child care and hospital care.

VALUE

I believe it's important to grant, however, that the Power of Women Collective have made at least some valuable contributions. For one thing, they have said loud and clear that housework is **work**. That still needs to be said. We must recognise that the contribution made by women is of value and is not easy and trivial. It's easy enough for childless women to dismiss housework as meaningless, but I'm not sure that that's a correct

assessment, especially since the majority of working class women have children and combine housework with child care and all the responsibilities of running a home.

We need to learn a lot from the insights gained by women as a result of this life experience, rather than assume they have to learn from childless women. The job of peacemaker and co-ordinator is one we need to learn fast on the left!

Secondly, I think it's wrong to assume that Wages for Housework of necessity applies only to women. What the Power of Women people are saying is that this is a job which **at the moment** all, or most, women do and are conditioned to regard as their first priority. If wages were available, they say, maybe there would be more status attached, there would be more freedom involved in having your own money, and **also**, it might involve men too, in that they could become the housekeeper just as easily as women. I'm not sure that this would follow, but equally it's not accurate to say that they are confining the woman to her traditional role, since men can be encouraged to take it up like any other job.

TRIVIAL

The following points from the article by Rachel Lever raise a number of questions.

1.) Housework ... is bound to be a more or less trivial concern.

Housework can be trivial if you are merely dusting round after yourself. However, if you are responsible for the care of a household of kids and other adults, I'd bet you'd say it was nerve-racking and full time. Even with as many aspects as possible taken care of in socialised conditions, the responsibility for getting the kids to creche, for putting them to bed, shopping for clothes, tidying the clothes away, and simply relating to them after school is surely no mean task.

Clearly we are asking for as many tasks to be socialised as possible, but we must address ourselves to the real situation, not some utopia. We must work towards a situation where these residual and sometimes very rewarding tasks are shared by the adults involved, preferably not in a nuclear situation. But even then I think the work of being responsible for the home would be quite a job, especially when the kids are young. Don't let's undervalue the work being done by our sisters.

2.) ...breaking out of the confines of the home.

Yes, but don't we want the home to be expanded? Not to run away from the home, but to make it a more human and rewarding place to be, with more people sharing the tasks and the joys of living together. I think we only want to break from its confines when it's a small confined box, not when it's a vibrant centre of activity. We want to change the home, not do away with it.

3.) ...the world of human endeavour.

Again this is to take a male view of the relative value of women's and men's traditional spheres of work. If the home were expanded, we would not find it so cramping, and surely we want to make the point that bourgeois history always glorifies male endeavour but that in reality women have in fact been contributing their own efforts unsung for generations, both in the mines and factories and in the care of their families. This is not to say that we don't want more chances to achieve in the 'outside' world, but that we also want recognition for our achievements so far, which have needed skill and have affected our attitude to the world in a not altogether negative way.

UNITS

4.) Women at home are outside the collective struggle of the working class.

Yes, but need this only occur in the factory? Aren't we in favour of tenants' action, prices campaigns, nursery and contraception campaigns, **organised** on a community basis?

5.) The loss of power that comes of being in small work units.

There will always be small units such as schools, canteens, cinemas etc. and we call for self-organisation in these places. Do we consider that multi-national groups are more revolutionary than smaller firms? If so, do we fight for their setting up? Surely we recognise the alienating effect of large units and wish to keep the more manageable work place. More difficult to organise, but in this age of mass media, surely not impossible.

6.) Doing away with housework...

Impossible. We can communalise a lot of it, but the most time-consuming and nerve racking aspects are difficult to socialise, eg the organisation and care of kids. The most difficult aspect of the mother-role is probably indispensable — someone has to care, to tidy up, to remember things, arbitrate, and generally console. (Of course, this mother-role is not necessarily a female function. Anyone can take on the "mother-role".)

TASKS

You can't pay for this, and you can share it out between the members of the household, but you certainly can't abolish it. So we should be making a clear and careful call for the expansion of the family in the interests of its members. It's unreasonable to simply call for its socialisation without explaining exactly how we envisage the actual tasks being socialised. Of course we would call for the tasks to be done by **either** sex, but then so would the Power of Women Collective.

7.) The adoption of demands for the socialisation of housework by the WLM... is a measure of the progressive nature of the Women's Liberation Movement.

I think there are many other illustrations to show that the WLM is progressive, and I think that at the moment it is presumptuous for us to judge the women's movement

since socialists are still so far from tackling the issues. I don't think that the Power of Women have been given too sympathetic a hearing, and I do think we should listen to what they have to say.

8.) I think their reference to 'outside work' is in order to make the point that women already as a rule do another job, i.e. mother and housekeeper. This point **has** to be made. It's certainly true that the women workers known to me still regard their paid employment as secondary to their primary job of housekeeping. Unless we recognise this and make some kind



of allowance for it we will constantly be horrified and surprised when women can't do picket duty because of their family commitments. It's no use pretending this isn't the case, because it is, and we must work to change it, both in the unions and by our propaganda in women's liberation. However, the first task is to spell out the problem, which Selma James does.

9.) If wages were paid for housework, education would be fitted to this: instead of maths, child psychology.

Well, why not? But not just for girls. I don't think we should go along with the capitalist idea that education is for the greater profit of industry. In a socialist society we would want child psychology on the curriculum, for both boys and girls, so why not now? Child care is a skilled job and of great value, so let's demand it be on the syllabus, along with cookery for boys. I think you have tended throughout to accept without question the male-dominated standard of what is of

value in our society, and I think these priorities are faulty.

GOAL

10.) 'Factory fodder'. (The wages for housework advocates argue that plentiful nurseries would be used to push women out to work, as factory fodder.)

There is no reason (as you say) why women should be specially privileged in this respect, but we're fighting for no-one to be fodder, aren't we? There are plenty of women who're factory fodder now and hate it. Our ultimate goal of shorter hours for all and control over our place of work is what's important. I think it's important to redress the balance, and stress that the nurseries we want must be run by the community and must be reasonably sized and under our control, not simply make demands for nurseries of whatever kind.

We are aiming for more leisure for both men and women to be with their children, taking their place in the world, which isn't necessarily in the factory. Of course until then we will have to fight, and it may be easier to organise that struggle in the factory rather than in the home, but let's not make out that it's great to be at work.

Nor should we make out that homes are 'safe confines' — for many women they're either sweat shops or concentration camps where they can expect a battering.

INSIGHTS

11.) Male chauvinism.

This isn't simply the obvious domination, but the kind of unthinking acceptance of many of the standards in our society. In fact, a lot of the article shows an acceptance of male standards which I'd consider male chauvinist. We've got a hard job on our hands and we've got to tackle it now, not just in our male comrades, but in ourselves. I think that the major contribution of the women's movement at present is in this area, of making us aware, on the left in particular, of the ways in which we have accepted the priorities of the ruling class, and specifically of men in that class, and that there is therefore a need to establish what there is of value in the ideas, priorities and insights of the rest of us. We can't afford to dismiss the new movements now emerging as easily as you have, and we should resist the temptation to label them until we have heard them fully and understood what's being said.

Replies and comments next week

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IMMIGRATION ACT USED AGAINST SOCIALIST

FRANCO Caprino, an Italian socialist living in London, was taken from his home on December 18th to Pentonville Prison. He has been held there ever since, pending deportation under the 1971 Immigration Act. No charges have been made against him; nor, contrary to some reports, is he wanted for criminal offences either in this country or in Italy.

The Home Secretary has the power to deport anyone whose presence is not considered "conducive to the public good"; in this case, "on grounds of national security". This is the first case that has come up under this clause of the 1971 Act, under which it is possible to appeal — to three anonymous 'advisers' who hear the case in private and give the Home Secretary their view of the case.

The legal procedure governing this 'tribunal' is apparently still unclear. But one thing is certain: neither Franco Caprino nor his lawyer will be allowed to hear the evidence provided by the Home Office, or undertake any cross-examination as to its contents. The only possible defence is to call character witnesses. At no time is the deportee allowed to know what accusations are made against him.

Franco Caprino lived legally in this country for over 6 years before he was arrested. He was active in the Italian revolutionary group "Lotta Continua" ('Fight On') and in the unionisation of catering workers in London hotels. In fact, this law could be used

against any foreign worker who gets involved in militant trade unionism or politics, or who the police simply wish to get out of the country. There is also no guarantee against deportation to a fascist country such as Spain, where long jail sentences could be expected to follow. In Caprino's case, if he were returned to Italy he would be forced to undergo military service.

As Workers Fight pointed out before now, the 1971 Act is a serious threat to everyone not of British nationality, and a powerful weapon in keeping immigrants weak and unorganised. Together with the Prevention of Terrorism Act just passed, it helps to expand those areas of the law which are kept from open investigation and scrutiny and where decisions are taken by remote or anonymous bureaucrats and charges are never given and cannot be replied to.

Franco Caprino's appeal is likely to be heard in three to four weeks' time. Already the North Kensington Labour Party has tried to send a delegation to Jenkins to protest the case. Further protests are being planned, including a picket.

The Labour Government should not be allowed to get away with this use of an Act which they claimed to oppose when the Tories brought it in.

(Further information from: Franco Caprino Support Committee, 60 St. Ervan's Road, London W.10)

ALL AGAINST INTEX STRIKE — RAZORS, RACISM AND UNION

THE 9-WEEK INTEX STRIKE ended on Tuesday 7th January. The strikers were finally defeated by isolation and lack of solidarity, and decided to go back united rather than risk further victimisations.

They have gone back fighting, with the key demands no victimisation by the bosses and no victimisation by the union. Already one steward, a supporter of the fascist National Front, has been kicked out, and a member of the strike committee elected in his place.

The strike arose out of the victimisation of Dave Hallsworth, a militant in the Intex work. He was expelled from the union — without

notification, without any kind of hearing, on the vaguest charges "acting in any way contrary to the interests of the union" — and subsequently sacked.

The majority of the production workers at Intex struck, but there was no support from craft and maintenance workers. A rank and file trade unionists' support committee was set up locally, Pochins Manchester Poly site levied 50p per head for the strikers, and United Manchester Hospitals NUPE decided to black all ICI products (Intex is a subsidiary of ICI).

Where there was, significantly, no support, was from bodies in which the Communist Party has a

leading influence — the ICI Combine Committee, and the Manchester and Salford Trades Council. The Communist Party, apparently, saw the matter as an internal union dispute, with an 'ultra-left' involved, and thought they had best keep out.

There is still a fight over the case of two pickets, arrested last week and held on remand since. They have been refused bail. They come up for trial on February 6th, on charges of "insulting behaviour" and "assaulting the police".

This is the first time locally for many years that arrested pickets have been refused bail; it is also the first time for many years

that picket lines have been attacked by bodies other than the police. National Front thugs wielding razors have tried to break up the picket lines.

The Intex Strike Committee is still appealing for messages of support and donations to help the defence of the arrested pickets: send them to *Secretary, Intex strike committee, 186 Kings Road, Ashton under Lyne.*

Jack SUTTON

239,000 LESS TEACHERS IN 1981

Educational expansion at no extra cost! — was the promise from Lord Crowther Hunt (Minister of State for Education) at the NUT Education Conference on 2nd - 3rd January.

According to Crowther-Hunt, the number of teachers in 1981 is likely to be 511,000 as against previous plans for 750,000. But this will result in no fall in teaching standards, since there will be fewer children!

Why not maintain the number of teachers and improve the staff-pupil ratio, asked one delegate. That, of course, was outside Crowther-Hunt's brief — and, after all, there is an economic crisis.

So the Government's promise is: things may not get much worse, as long as the birthrate stays down and not too many children stay on after the school leaving age.

SANCTIONS

The NUT Education Conference did not come forward with the slightest suggestion as to how this outlook could be changed. A whole series of well-intentioned resolutions were passed, all of them, apart from the one calling for the removal of compulsory religious instruction, requiring increased state expenditure. Not one word on what sanctions the NUT might pursue if those reforms were not forthcoming.

The genteel ineffectuality of the conference was epitomised by one resolution, voted unanimously and without debate, for an investigation into "the ways in which boys and girls are discriminated against". There was no discussion — and there will probably be as little action!

One resolution which might have provoked some serious debate — it called for action against racism in textbooks, and the introduction of Black and Asian studies — was not taken.

Sue Arnall

TEACHERS' PAY REPORT SCOTS LESSONS NOT LEARNED

TEACHERS' union leaders in England and Wales this week accepted the Houghton pay settlement. It represents a 4.35 per week increase for basic scale classroom teachers, £20 for higher grades, and up to £40 per week increase for head teachers.

The contrast between low and high grades is glaring, and again validates teachers' scepticism about the head teacher-dominated National Union of Teachers executive. The outlook is for teaching to deteriorate more and more, with staff turnover, one of the major problems in schools today, escalating.

Half hearted moves were made by the National union of Teachers to get further increases (£1.75 per week!) for teachers at the bottom of the scale, but these failed in the face of Education Secretary Reg Prentice insisting that the Houghton recommendations should not be redistributed.

In sharp contrast with England and Wales, Scottish teachers, after two

months of strikes and other disruptions, have forced a reduction in the number of pay scales to two, and a redistribution of money within the Houghton global sum.

This redistribution is in the form of a reduction of 10% in the increases proposed for heads and principal teachers, so that the minimum increase for classroom teachers is raised from £4.40 to £7.70. Houghton himself admitted that his committee had been more affected by what has been going on in Scotland than by any other event.

Houghton's reasoning that you best reduce teacher turnover by dangling the carrot of high pay later (rather than a living wage at the start so teachers can get on with the job instead of looking for promotion all the time) has been accepted by the Labour government and the press. For Scotland, however, it's different... There, the argument of militancy has done a lot to moderate the arguments of Houghton!

Jan Wilde

London fight back

TEACHERS representing 100 London schools tonight met to discuss action against the Houghton proposals for teachers' pay, and for the demand for £15 per week flat rate increase for all teachers.

If the Houghton proposals are ratified at the Special National Union of Teachers Salaries Conference at Central Hall, Westminster, on January 25th, they become binding for seven years, and the divisiveness of the scale system will be cemented in.

Dick North, a member of the NUT Executive, revealed that the Executive majority abandoned official union policy on the Houghton proposals even before those proposals were on the table for discussion on January 6th.

In place of the NUT official policy of a starting salary of £2000, there was a 'half hearted' attempt to get an extra £90 on an offer of £1767.

The NUT Executive's excuse was that there was a promise of "significant attention" being paid to the starting salary in negotiations over the 1975 April Pay Award.

Promises, promises. But, in the event of ratification of the sell-out at the special salaries conference on January 25th, Rank and File must be prepared immediately to launch a campaign around the April Pay Award for £2500 starting salary, and upward assimilation of Houghton scale 1 into scale 2.

as a way of turning the excuse back on to the NUT Executive.

Reg Prentice, Education Secretary, is already telling us that the Social Contract is in our best interests, since it protects the weaker unions like ours, and doesn't let people like the miners forge too far ahead... As things stand, if we are forced to accept our 1975 pay award within the Social Contract, and current threshold payments are assimilated into the salary scales, the basic scale teacher can expect an increase of around £80 a year. Perhaps the miners had the right idea.

In the meantime, organisation for a mass lobby of the special salaries conference on January 25th is vital.

This is the timetable of events leading up to the mass lobby.

January 14th. National strike action in schools which made preparations.

January 18th, 2pm. National conference for delegates and supporters at Holland Park School, Airlie Gardens, London W8.

Week beginning January 20th. Week of action, with special emphasis on the Tuesday and Friday, as a build up towards the special salaries conference.

January 25th. Mass lobby of salaries conference, Central Hall, Westminster. Conference starts 8.30 a.m. Be there 8 a.m.!

IAN HOLLINGWORTH

We're not playing anywhere

had never been used.

The Students' Union Playgroup has now taken this over, with the support of the Student Union Executive. Student Union President Roy Ratcliffe has issued a call to other colleges in the area to support the Playgroup's "continued stay until alternative accommodation is found or offered", and has also invited domestic and tutorial staff to use the facility for their children if they wish.

Help has been offered by student bodies in Ormskirk and Lancaster. And, after being caught out in a blatant lie, Chorley college authorities are playing things very cool. Principal Mr. Luther Kenworthy ever said he was "doing all I can to help them". A late conversion but it shows what militant action can do!

BUILDING UNIONS DUCK WAGES FIGHT

THE PAY offer now being voted on by hundreds of thousands of building workers is a complicated and devious one.

A number of small concessions, in themselves steps forward, have been made. But on the main question of the basic rate, the joint union demand of £1.50 per hour craft and £1.40 per hour non-craft has been thrown out completely. And there is nothing towards the union demand of a 35 hour working week.

But the leaders of UCATT and the T&GWU Building Section are recommending acceptance. They are not fighting for the demands that came from the Union Conferences — in fact, they never even presented them to the employers.

First, what are the small concessions? The death benefit

by Tom Ramsey

scheme will give £2,000 minimum (on proof of having an up to date 'Holiday with Pay' card). Sick pay is to rise by 100%, to £1.50 per day for nine days. The consolidation of threshold money from last year will boost the basic rate, and for those working overtime it looks good.

But these concessions, important in principle but small, do not make up for the miserable offer on the basic rate.

The employers are offering a two stage deal to run for 18 months, until June 1976. The first increase will give a basic rate of £34 to craft workers, and £29 to non-craft. Through a Joint Board Supplement and a Guaranteed Minimum Bonus, it will give a guaranteed rate of

£37. This first basic increase is mainly made up by consolidating the thresholds, so for the period until June 1975, the new money will only be 60p on the basic.

The second state of the deal will give a basic rate of £37, and a guaranteed £46 for craftsmen. Non-craft workers are to get £31.40 basic and £39.20 guaranteed.

This will do three things. It will widen the differential between craft and non-craft to £7 by June 1976. It will leave building workers over £15 per week short of the joint national claim voted for at last year's Union conferences. And — most important for the Union leaders and the Labour Government — it will give a lot of help to the Social Contract.

What the offer also means, by refusing a cut in hours, is more building workers out of a job by the end of 1975.

Building workers must follow up a No vote with plans for industrial action to win the Union conferences' claim!

	Present rates		Offer 6.1.75		30.6.75		
	Craft	Non-craft	Craft	Noncraft	Craft	Non-craft	
Basic	29.00	24.60	34.00	29.00	37.00	31.40	
Threshold	4.40	4.40	Supplement	2.60	2.20	5.00	4.20
Min. bonus	3.00	2.60	Min. bonus	3.40	2.80	4.00	3.60
Min. pay	36.40	31.60	Min. pay	40.00	34.00	46.00	39.20

NHS wreckers plan to set up on the Lump

THE consultants' dispute with the Labour Government centres around the latest pay and conditions offer from Barbara Castle. Consultants who devote themselves full time to the NHS are offered an increase in pay of 18%, and a greater percentage of the 'merit awards' and the compensation for working in certain areas.

In bitter opposition to the Castle offer, the British Medical Association and Hospital Consultants and Specialists Association, have begun a 'work to rule' in an attempt to force the Labour Government to back down.

This 'work to rule' has got some scattered support, and has so far meant an increase in the waiting list for patients. But the BMA and HCSA have got further plans. They are to set up their own 'lump' agency and hire consultants back to the NHS to do the work they are refusing to do in the 'work to rule'. The agency intends to charge £8 per hour, with an agency fee of £15 per week.

The consultants say they are defending 'free' and 'independent' medicine. What 'freedom' and what

by Stephen Corbishley

'independence'? Freeing medical care from money-grabbing and mercenary discrimination? No.

It is the freedom to operate private practice within the NHS, using NHS facilities and NHS beds. Freedom to let the NHS run down.

The call by NUPE, the ancillary workers' union, to black private patients where consultants take action, frightens Barbara Castle more than the consultants' 'work to rule'. Already the North West Area Committee of NUPE has organised blacking of private patients in hospitals where there has been a work to rule. Moorfields Eye Hospital has been forced to throw out its private patients because of the action by NHS members.

The last thing Barbara Castle wants is open war against private medicine within the NHS — though that's the only way to come to grips with the problem.

The consultants say they fear that the Labour Government would scrap all private medicine. But the Times of December 6th noted "the government has moved a long way to meet the basic objections of consultants to the proposals" over pay beds.

Castle's whole approach has been to get a settlement as soon as possible, before the ancillary workers, nurses and hospital technicians who have borne the burden of a creaking, under-

financed NHS for the last 20 years explode; and before the lower paid doctors, heavily overworked, come out in action. But what we need is a firm, straightforward stand now: no private medicine.

SCOTT'S' BAKERY GETS OUT THE DOGS

IN THEIR attempt to smash the bakery workers' new militancy, the management of Scott's bakery in Liverpool have resorted to blatant thuggery. Eight alsatian dogs and about sixty security guards were used to force out workers who were occupying part of the factory.

The occupation was a result of victimisation of shop stewards Ken Hughes and Billy Caldwell, who had been active in the recent strike. They were sent home after refusing to work with non union labour, and were sacked when they refused to accept the decision. The branch had already decided that in the event of victimisations they would occupy the doughhouse, and this policy was now implemented, unfortunately by only seventeen night shift workers.

At 10 a.m. the next morning, the security men and their dogs burst into the room, accompanied by Peter Scott, the managing director. The 17 were told that they were sacked, and were pushed down the stairs with the dogs snapping at their heels. One worker was bitten.

As they were being thrown out of the factory, the men were

threatened with further physical violence by the thugs (employed by Kirkland Security Services) in the hearing of the police, who later — surprise, surprise! denied hearing anything.

The workers still in the bakery voted to support the 17, but have taken no action, preferring to leave things up to the official union machinery. Speaking to Liverpool Trades Council, Billy Caldwell described the situation in the bakery as being one of 'martial law', and said that union leader Stan Gretton had refused to lift a finger to help them.

The Trades Council decided to bring the situation to the attention of various MPs and the Home Secretary, and called on the government to seize the assets of Kirkland Security Services. But all this won't get the seventeen workers their jobs back unless rank and file action is taken against the Alliance Bakery Group. All trade unionists can help by blacking the products and supplies of this group, and sending messages of protest to the Bakers' Union.

PETE CRESSWELL (Liverpool Revolutionary Marxist Current)

London Workers Fight forum. Chris Gray on "James Connolly". 8.30pm, Sunday 12th January, at the "George", Liverpool Road, N1.

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